**GROWING SUCCESS IN THE MATHEMATICS CLASSROOM**

***Classroom Dynamics, Examined through a Start-up Checklist***

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| ***Classroom Dynamics is the establishment and maintenance of the conditions that allow students to be engaged in meaningful learning through deliberate and purposeful planning, actions and responses.*** |

**Guiding Principle**

Professionals want the opportunity to develop and discover strategies for the classroom, that are definitive enough to result in action, but flexible enough to pertain to the individual’s own school, class, and situation.

**Who?**

A teacher who wants help determining what elements should be addressed in order to set up a classroom for optimal success during the first days of the semester/year. This teacher desires to work independently and grow professionally in the area of mathematics classroom dynamics.

**Task**

Review the Start-up Checklist in order to:

* determine the current strategies that you have in place to establish positive classroom dynamics upon student entry
* identify the elements that have not yet been considered
* decide what plans and preparations you are willing make in order to create more opportunities for success

**How?**

1. Review the checklist with a critical eye.
2. Highlight elements that you have already considered, planned, and prepared for.
3. Prepare an action plan and any resources required to address at least 3 elements that you have NOT highlighted.

# Start-up Checklist

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| Managing the classroom for success | Laying out the classroom for success | Building relationships for success |
| * How will I deal with inappropriate behavior? * How am I going to plan my lessons? E.g. planner, e-calendar, by unit * What are my A & E plans for my courses? What are my major evaluations? What are my on-going assessment strategies? * How do I minimize marking and collect sufficient evidence of learning? * Where am I going to record my marks and in which format, with labeling? * How am I going to track lates, homework, absences, parent contact, student info? * Are there tools, programs, manipulatives that I need to review? * When using technology, do I have alternate activities running at the same time in case equipment fails? * Are my plans aligned with school and ministry policies? * What is my first assignment/homework going to be? * How am I going to deal with incomplete homework the first time? On a regular basis? | * How will we arrange the seating chart for the first day? * What layouts will I use throughout the year to help with learning? * How will my students transition efficiently between layouts? * What classroom supplies do I need to obtain for my classes? e.g. calculator, batteries, protractors, Bristol board, chalk, colored paper, * Do I have sufficient materials, aids, manipulatives, etc. in proper working order? * How will I deal with pencil, paper distribution and collection? * What am I putting on the walls of my class? * Have I considered placement of students with special needs and requirements as well as education assistants? | * How will I incorporate student interest into my lessons? * How will I keep my cool under pressure? * What is my plan for work/life balance? * What are the tangibles that remind me I am making a difference? * What am I sending home to parents on day one? * What info am I willing to record regularly on my website? * What info are students responsible for gathering? * How am I going to communicate with parents? * What must I check at the end of the day before leaving? (e.g.voicemail, everything needed for the next day, skips, e-mails, mailbox, attendance) * Who are my team teachers? * How will I learn student names? * Have I had someone else proofread any document that I am sending home? * Have I reviewed OSRs and IEPs for students and developed strategies to accommodate needs? |

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| Classroom management | Classroom layout | Relationships |
| * Am I considering my original checklist? * Do I have evidence of student learning? * Which policies are working and which ones need adjustment? * Am I introducing new instructional strategies * Am I teaching my students how to move forward and achieve desired success? * Am I teaching study, test, presentation, exam writing techniques? | * Am I considering my original checklist? * Am I making conscious decisions around the knowledge that I have gained of my students and the specifics of my learning activities? | * Have I learned students first and last names? * Am I considering my original checklist? * Have I identified at-risk students/families and how am I maintaining communication? * Am I catching kids “doing good”? * Am I starting afresh each day? Do I live out “every day is a new day”? * Am I aware of what my students are doing outside of class? * Am I integrating their interests and capabilities into my instructional strategies and plans? * Am I identifying weaknesses and supporting student needs? * Do I smile and have fun with my students? |

# Useful resources

Jones, F. (2000). *Tools for Teaching*. Santa Cruz, CA: Fredric H. Jones & Associates, Inc.

Wong, H.K. & Wong, R.T. (2009) *The First Days of School.* Mountain View, CA: Harry K. Wong Publications, Inc.